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# NEWS

FOR RELEASE

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### MONSANTO ANNOUNCES DIOXIN FOLLOW-UP TEST FINDINGS

LULING, LA. Dec. 16 -- Monsanto Company said today that further company tests at its plant here confirmed that dioxin found in the soil earlier this year is confined to a small localized area of the plant where the herbicide 2,4,5-T was handled in the mid-1960's.

Vincent E. Boyen, Luling Plant Manager, said the tests showed that the total area where any dioxin whatsoever could be found was approximately 100 feet wide by 300 feet long and that over 80 percent of this area contained less than 10 parts per billion (ppb) dioxin concentration. The affected area is along a section of railroad siding where 2,4,5-T was loaded and unloaded some 16 years ago.

Sampling for the dioxin was observed by an official from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Immediately after the sampling the area was covered with plastic sheeting and shells to assure that no exposure would result from disturbing the soil. Covering the area is the most practical long term approach for limiting exposure at industrial sites.

Boyen said the latest test results show that the dioxin has not moved from the railroad siding where 2,4,5-T was handled. "Concentrations are essentially limited to the upper 12 inches of soil and drop off sharply away from the loading and unloading section of the siding," he said. "That further

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validates that dioxin binds itself tightly to the soil and does not migrate."

Dioxin concentrations of less than 10 ppb were found in 89 percent of the 28 core samples analyzed from 16 locations on and around the rail siding. Results confirmed the low levels of dioxin found in the original sampling and further defined the localized area. In all, 50 locations have been sampled at depths ranging from zero to 40 inches.

The railroad siding along which the dioxin was handled is more than one-half mile inside the boundaries of the 1555 acre plant. Previous testing showed no evidence of dioxin in water samples or in products currently made at the plant.

Monsanto has discussed the latest test results with state, federal, and local officials and has informed the plant workforce of the findings.

"We will continue to manage the area in the future in a manner which will ensure that there is no hazard to our workers, the community, or the environment," Boyen said.

Monsanto's Luling Plant has been in operation since 1954. Approximately 830 employees work at the facility which is on the west bank of the Mississippi River 15 miles west of New Orleans.

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